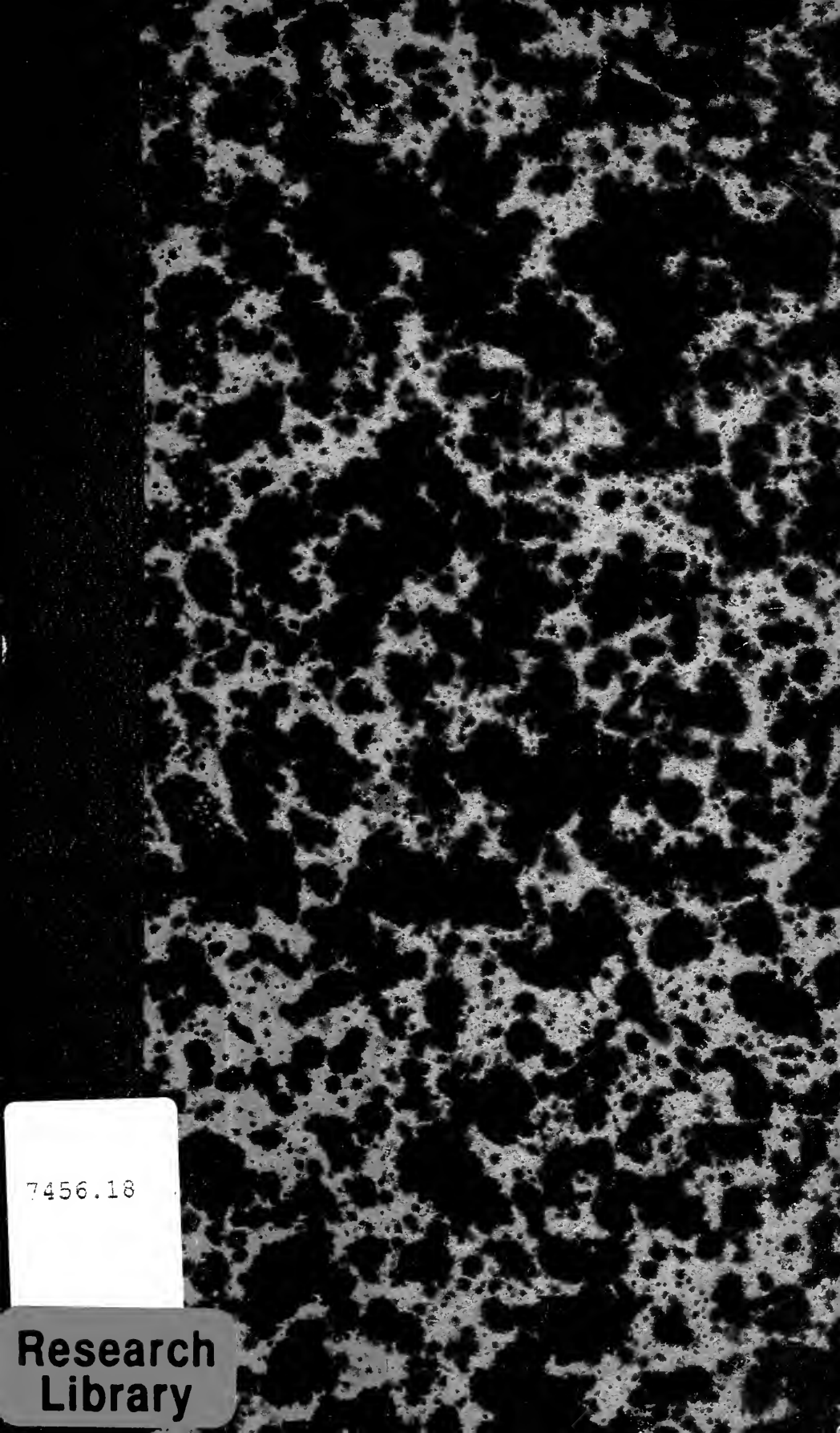
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A BUNDLE OF MYRRH.

THANKSGIVING SERMON:

PREACHED NOV. 28, 1850,

AT NEWBURY, FIRST PARISH,

BY LEONARD WITHINGTON,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH.

—— We never seem to gain a paltry advantage over them—i. e. the abolitionists—in debate, without attacking some of those principles, or deriding some of those feelings, for which our ancestors have shed their blood.—*Burke's Speech on Conciliation with America.*

SECOND EDITION.

NEWBURYPORT:
CHARLES WHIPPLE.
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THANKSGIVING SERMON:

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SERMON.

A BUNDLE OF MYRRH IS MY WELL BELOVED UNTO ME.—Solomon's Song, 1: 13—First Clause.

THERE are several expressions in the context which we are apt to read without notice. The Bible is a book of deep meaning, and in order to be understood requires constant attention. We are familiar from our childhood with its language and terminology, but not so familiar with its comprehensive meaning. Hence we slide over some important discoveries, even as the ignorant savage walks over the barren surface which conceals gold and silver in its native bed. Reading the Bible is often like gliding down a brook or stream where the depth varies; sometimes the weeds and pebbles at the bottom are obvious, and sometimes they lie so deep that the closest attention is necessary to discover them. We should always keep our mind awake. We should always ask ourselves, What does this mean? Do I understand it? How does it apply to me? To the inner man there is another sleep than that which closes the natural eye. In the context, it is said, *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's Chariots. Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels; thy neck*

with chains of gold. We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver. While the King sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof—and then, in our text it is said, *A bundle of myrrh is, &c.* You will notice the expression and learn to place the emphasis on the right word. It is not said, horses, but a *company of horses*; not jewels, but *rows* of jewels; not gold, but *chains* of gold; and in the text it is not myrrh, but a *bundle* of myrrh. Now what is the meaning of all this? Let us see.

Whatever is worth doing is generally worth doing well. Even in so simple a thing as presenting a nosegay to a friend, you wish to mingle your roses, tulips, daffodils, jonquils—your rich and more delicate flowers in such a way as best to please the eye and regale the smell. In preparing a dinner, you have a reference to our original taste and our love of variety. The meat and the vegetables, the acid and the sweet, the main dishes and the dessert are all arranged by some science; and Milton tells us, that even in Paradise our mother Eve, when she entertained the angel guest, was led by Nature in the state of innocence, to spread her table with a well assorted variety. She brought her inoffensive *musts and meathes*, with all the skill of a spiritual cook.

> So saying with dispatchful looks in haste
> She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,
> What choice to choose for delicacy best
> What order so contrived as not to mix
> Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
> Taste after taste upheld by kindliest change.

This skillful mixture is the truest nature. It brings all the elements of realization into one piece. I have read books of real power and merit, which have failed because they were not *bundles of myrrh*; they were not *rows of jewels;* that is, they did not mingle the soft and the severe, the light and the shade, the agitation and the repose, as God has mixed them in the universe. Have you not seen, on some summer day, when darkness veiled the noontide sun and vapors loaded the air, how all the clouds thickened into the deepest gloom, how the thunders grumbled at a distance—how in the course of the afternoon, deeper and deeper the awful noise approached—peal on peal—flash after flash—enlarging—deepening—mingling—until the storm seemed to rend the heavens, and threaten universal ruin? Then when the tempest had spent its force, the cloud would roll to the east, hanging over the waters—presenting its beautiful bow. And when the evening came, the moon would rise—scarce a zephyr breathes—all nature sinks into the sweetest repose, as if she were ambitious to give us all her varieties in a single day, and regale us with the capacious basket of her collected sweets. *He appointeth the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work*

and to his labor until the evening. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

But, if it is important to make this natural and skillful mixture in material things, how much more important is it, when we present a religious or political system to the reason and action of mankind! Then you want your *bundle* of myrrh; that is, not one, or two ingredients of truth, but such a union, such a comprehension of needed verities, as may command the faith and inspire the conduct of all your followers. Thousands of philosophers have failed by presenting a false platform. They had some truth, perhaps, but they mixed it with much error. Their composition was false and self-destructive. Their tune was full of discords, and grated on the ear. It might command admiration for a time; but, to change the figure, the dry-rot was in the system and the whole edifice was sure to crumble at last. Instead of being a bundle of myrrh, it was a bundle containing a few sprigs of myrrh, tied up in a frail string, with worm-wood, pig-weed, garlic, and all those nauseous herbs, which only make the beauty more deformed and the fragrance more disgusting. When you present a platform to command the assent of mankind to any important measure, and calculated to insure a lasting union, remember the expressions of our context —"A *company* of horses—*rows* of jewels—*chains* of gold—*studs* of silver; or, as our text has it—A BUNDLE of myrrh; that is, such a composition, where all the

ingredients harmonize; such as, securing the conscience, commands the assent of mankind; such as enforces the laws of men by immortal sanctions, and such as produces no war between reason and feeling —between beauty and truth, between the citizen and the Christian—between the conscience and the heart.

Thus it is important in every case of reforming the sentiments or manners of men, to present a true platform, commanding at once the assent of the understanding and the warmest admiration of the affections; and this perhaps is what Paul meant when he said, *Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Let us illustrate this principle by a few striking instances derived from history. Let us begin with philosophy. Here we shall all agree, for here our judgment is impeded by the fewest prejudices.

It is well known in ancient times that all the celestial motions were explained on the Ptolemaic theory. That theory was almost natural and necessary in the infancy of science. It assumed that the earth stood still and all the planets and stars moved around it. It was a long time before philosophers could so far abstract their reason from their senses as to distinguish between apparent and real motion. They saw that the heavens seemed to move, and

they felt that the earth seemed to stand still, and it was a first postulate with them that in order to begin to reason they must first trust their sight. "The explanation of the celestial motions which naturally occurred to those who began the study of the heavens, was, that the stars are so many luminous points fixed in the surface of a sphere, having the earth in its centre and revolving on an axis passing through that centre in the space of twenty-four hours. When it was observed that all the stars did not partake of this diurnal motion in the same degree, but that some were carried slowly towards the east, and that their paths, estimated in that direction, after certain intervals of time, returned into themselves, it was believed that they were fixed in the surfaces of spheres, which revolved westward more slowly than the spheres of the fixed stars. These spheres must be transparent, or made of mere crystaline substance, and hence the name of the crystaline spheres, by which they were distinguished. This system, though it grew more complicated in proportion to the number and variety of the phenomena observed, was the system of Aristotle and Eudoxus, and with a few exceptions, of all the philosophers of antiquity."*

Now with respect to this system, two things were inevitably true; it must grow more complex on longer observation; and, secondly, it was sure to be overthrown when these observations became complete. Every time a thinking man raised his eye to the heavens, it was in danger; it was like a broad build-

* Playfair's Dissertation.

ing, on a narrow foundation; the more you exalt and expand the top, it totters and falls at last by its own leanings. The truth was, it presented to the intellectual world a false platform. It explained some things, but not all. It was ill compacted, and not made up of harmonious ingredients. It was not a bundle of myrrh; it was only a few ingredients of that precious plant; and when its weakness was once detected, it was sure to be as heartily hated and despised, as it was formerly embraced and loved.

The same remark may be made of the ideal theory which once prevailed among a portion of the old philosophers. I have not time to develop either the beauty or deformity of this system, (for it had both;) suffice it to say, that its aim was, to explain the operations of nature by the harmony and connection of ideas; that is, you must take a central idea and build a system on it, just as in arithmetic, you take unity and repeat it, to obtain the idea of numbers; and from numbers you derive all the rules of arithmetic and all the operations under these rules. They supposed that the material world was shadowy and rude; it was a kind of masquerade; water thickened into earth, was rarified into air, and air was resolved into fire; all nature was running in a circle, and she herself was a fugitive slave; no observation was certain and no science was fixed. You must go to ideas; these were fixed—certain—objects of knowledge and sources of light; and it was by their agreement that we must find our system. Now such a platform was

sure to fall; it was only partially true; it could not stand the test of observation and it was sure to give place to Bacon's system, (which is itself still a partial one,) that man is the minister and interpreter of nature, and must derive all his knowledge of the Universe from material experiments.

In religion we see the same error. History is full of examples. The system has either failed by not meeting the convictions of men for the want of a good platform, or what is still worse, it has saddled on mankind a galling delusion, which, under the name of light, has only increased their darkness. In forming this platform, *two* questions are important. First, what will command their assent? and secondly, what will be lasting in its benign influence and in its sure conviction? Here we see the divinity of the Christian faith; we see at once the secret of its blessed power and its long success. It was a bundle of myrrh, and therefore the church could say—he shall lie all night near my heart;—that is, it was a collection of truths as divine in their composition as they were in their individual state; and through the long night of the middle ages, when philosophy was perverted and truth was almost lost, these truths continued to shine not only as single stars but as a glorious constellation, enlightening the terrestrial eye by adorning the heavens and guiding frail mortals to the celestial elevation in which they shone. The truth is, they met man's whole nature; they exhausted the strength even of divine invention; they

were the fullness of God. They left none of our moral powers unexercised or untouched; and they stand as a model of that fullness and truth which we should all aim at, whenever we wish to enlighten ourselves, or lead mankind.

Such is Christianity in its original state. It is a system; a full system; a glorious system; a lasting system; *apples of gold in pictures of silver.* But the fault of men has been—not as has been most absurdly said—in having a system; but in forming a wrong, or defective system; in leaving out some great truth needful to the harmony of the whole, or, in putting in some falsehood that was injurious, or destructive of the whole. Before Luther's day, it was law, free agency, human power; and on these partial truths, which left alone became absurd errors, was built the vast structure of ritual religion, penances and austerities, which hid the simple gospel for ages—and, in Luther's day, though he presented a better platform, yet, I think, it was hardly a complete bundle of myrrh. Some sprigs, I fear, of the aromatic plant were left out. The doctrine of sovereignty; of a divine purpose, an absorbing decree, was too strongly presented; *that* element, which is really in the Bible, was too exclusively insisted on. The proportions of truths were distorted. Hence, in that age, fanaticism, and, in a later age, Arminianism, were developed; and what we need now is, not only truth, but truth rightly divided; placed in its true proportion and its proper light; in one word, the divine platform,

which sanctifies the nature, and, finally, will command the assent of mankind.

I have hitherto illustrated this fact both in philosophy and in religion. Many more examples might be given. Let us now approach a more critical subject—a theme on which I must forestall your patience and candor—for which I hope the already alleged instances have in some degree prepared the way.

You have a pond to cross—you are preparing a raft, and you wish it to hold together until it has borne you on the surface over those profound recesses where your sinking must prove your destruction. Surely now it is important that the raft should be of good materials and well put together, so that it may not part in the middle of your passage, and leave you to danger and ruin in the hour of your utmost need. The pond may be calm and smooth when you begin your passage. Not a cloud may darken the sky; not a breath may blow—but before your course is finished the weather may change, the winds may freshen, the waves may arise, and it may require all your skill to reach the farther side. Pray let your raft be constructed of good materials. See to it that you do not have water-soaked beams, or rotten logs, or any light matters which the wind may blow away, or the water may wash from beneath your feet. It would be a most instructive history to relate all the parties and combinations of men that have been upset for want of a good platform. Almost every party

has some truth and presents to the world some plausibilities, but they often mix in some fatal materials that eat out all the rest; just as in the drawer, where the lady keeps her finest dresses, there may be a phial of vitriol, which breaks and consumes all her garments.

In ancient Rome, there was a time when the Senate ruled; the aristocracy were the soul of the nation; and they presented to the people what they called a good platform. It was skillfully selected; it for a time hid its errors; it was for a while partially received by the people. But it proved a very bad thing in the end. It was so rotten at last that even its friends could not stand on it. It had indeed some noble materials in it. But do you not know; have you not seen in your own observation, that a building, some of whose timbers are solid oak, may yet fall by having weaker matter mixed with it? A ship may sink by the springing of a single plank. There was a time when the Senate was the nation; they paid the taxes, raised the army, conquered the foe, saved the nation; and it seemed natural and just that the conquered lands should belong to them. They took them at a small quit-rent; and they were handed down from father to son. They were public property, let to the nobles at a long indefinite lease. All this worked tolerably well while the Senate was the central power. But behold! a silent change is wrought in the nation; a new power springs up. The commons become important. They

are the life and the soul of the nation; they fight the battles, and constitute the armies and pay the taxes; and they soon demand an agrarian law; that is, they demand to share in the benefit of renting these public lands. The subject has been greatly misunderstood. An agrarian law was not an invasion of private property, as has sometimes been represented; but a claim which they considered founded in abstract justice to share in the division of that property for which they had fought and some of them died. But the other party still continued to cling to the old platform. They talked about the Constitution, and compact, and the Union, and sacred engagements; but they could not reason people out of their moral sentiments. The everlasting rules of justice were against them; and they were finally overthrown; not by the arms of Cæsar, or the force of political opposition; but because, like the giants of old, they vainly attempted to war with Heaven.

The old cavaliers, in the time of Charles II, were men of some wisdom and some power. It has often been said that the sabre or the pen must govern men; and that the sabre has the most immediate and the pen the most lasting influence. Both these powers seemed to be with the old royal party; and as they had just won a victory over their opponents, and represented them as visionaries and fanatics; as they had all the treasures of the nation at their command, it seemed as if their victory would be as lasting as it was complete. But alas! they presented to

the world a bad platform. They attempted to cross the lake on a raft which could not hold together. Some of the ingredients were good; some plausible; some specious in their show, and some venerable for their antiquity. But the compound was bad; it was *not a bundle of myrrh;* and the Church could not say, it shall *lie all night near to my heart.* Time was sure to detect the falsehood and reveal the weakness of their political creed; and they fell as all false advocates have fallen, before the light of reason and the progress of truth.

There are worms which sometimes enter the bark of the loftiest tree, whose silent eating is sure to blast its beauty and end its life. There are streams that run beneath the loftiest walls, that undermine their foundation. There are plague-spots on the face, that mark the man as a victim of the tomb. There are tones, amidst the gentle whispers of the night, which sound to the discriminating ear like the knell of death. God is a holy God and he will not tolerate that policy which despises justice and dissolves his law.

My Hearers: It is Thanksgiving Day and I hope none of the disastrous events of the last year will impair our gratitude, or blind our eyes to the good things we *have* received. We should remember both the sunshine and the cloud—nay, we should try to see the sunshine through the cloud. Thus, I think, that most disastrous event, the failure of the potato crop, great as the evil is, and hard as it bears on the

poorer section of our population, should not suppress our gratitude for the corn and the grass—the numerous good things we have received; and the recent election, though no doubt it has disappointed some of you; yet, I hope it will not spoil your gratitude. I hope it will not even spoil your appetite for your Thanksgiving dinner. I hope you will eat it with as good a relish, and as much thankfulness as ever. I am sure I feel quite resigned. I can say over the Lord's Prayer with as much heart as ever I did in my life.—*Thy kingdom come*, and then the next petition is, *Thy will be done.* Some good may come out of our troubles; and one good, I hope, will be, to teach us to be more careful what timber we put into our platform; for, I hold, when a party is defeated, it is often, very often by their own mismanagement. *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots. Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels; thy neck with chains of gold. We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver. While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. A bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me; he shall lie all night near to my heart.*

Nobody is more sorry than I am for the late disasters; and my sorrow is very deep, for it goes up to the causes. I am sorry that honest men should adopt a bad platform. We have had some things in our public papers and speeches which are perfectly shocking; when we are told, for example, that no

man has a right to exercise his conscience on human law; that our supreme allegiance is to the Constitution; that the Union is every thing; that a poor human victim, no matter what his injuries, is to be given up to the most galling oppression—merely because his face is too tawny exactly to suit our taste—that peace is to be purchased by injustice and trade promoted by irreligion; when these things are said, the party that says them deserves to be defeated, and let me add, they take the best measures to secure their own defeat. For justice, after all, has some influence over mankind. Its sentiments are deeply woven in the human heart. If you teach other doctrines you may soon be the victims of your own success.

Mr. Burke said in one of his pieces—and he was no radical—that "bad laws are the worst kind of tyranny." They are deliberate tyranny; tyranny on system—not a single act, but perpetual tyranny. If the Southern gentlemen did but know it, the Fugitive Slave Bill is the worst thing for their cause that could possibly be invented. Because it keeps the system constantly before our minds; it keeps us in constant irritation, and presents a spectacle which is always reminding us of the deformity of slavery and our participation in it. We are called upon to join in the robbery, and not share one particle of the spoil. We are called upon to be disinterested villains. Now I venture to predict this constant spectacle will do more to alienate the two portions of the

country than any thing that could be imagined. We cannot alter our feelings. We cannot abolish our humanity. We cannot annihilate our conscience, or turn our hearts into iron.

As the law can never give relief to the slave-owners and must produce irritation—as the most intelligent amongst them must know this, and Mr. Calhoun seems, before his death, to have confessed it —it may be asked, what is the particular charm in this law which makes the Southern people so zealous about it? It cannot be its direct utility; for they must know the relief will be very small. What then is the motive? I strongly suspect it is to degrade us—to make us come down from our high moral ground. Every body knows they have borne our reproaches with great impatience. They have called us fanatics, hypocrites, sentimentalists, pretenders to morality, and dissemblers in religion. Now if they can only make us participate in the crime of slavery, it will be a great relief to them. And what can be a greater participation than coolly submitting to the office of catching their negroes whenever they run away? It seems to them to be a noble act, because it is done from the pure love of oppression. They delight to see us thus employed.

Perhaps if a sober and wise man were to meet a southern planter highly exasperated at the conduct of the North, he might address him—waiting for the cooler moment, when he might listen to reason—in some such language as the following: "My

friend, you are exasperated, you blame us—you charge us with breaking the constitutional compact, you say we disregard your rights, and our most sacred promises. But pray consider our condition. We have given up our own slaves, and we have followed the whole civilized world in a deep abhorrence of the system. You call us fanatics; but in this generous opinion we have followed Locke, Sidney, Mansfield, Blackstone, Adam Smith, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and all the moral poets that have written. Now do you not know that it is incident to giving up the system to have a great abhorrence for it? Nothing would tempt us to have slavery among ourselves. We should regard it as the greatest evil; not only to the beings in bondage, but to all who own them. Do you not then see that the execution of such a law must be very difficult among a people of such opinions? We are desirous to do for you what we can. We value the Union and we mean to keep our engagements. But do not you see that the strict execution of such a law must be always painful and often impossible? It will be evaded, interpreted, winked at, crept round—set aside, and eluded in every possible way. This is inevitable; the cause of it is laid in the very nature of things. No man, in assisting to enforce it, can be much of a volunteer. Then there are a people among us—fanatics, as you call them—who honestly believe that the law is opposed to the law of God. They think it is their duty to resist it; and they are filling the hall, the

vestry, and the press with their fervent declamation. They are a minority; but they have *some* influence on the public mind. What shall we do with them? Shall we stop their presses, and shut up their mouths, and pass sedition laws, in order to preserve a despotic peace? This would be a dangerous game to begin, because we do not know where it would stop. This might introduce a civil war among ourselves, and make us all slaves in order to continue you as masters. What then shall we do? We will do all for you that we can. But we can't repeal the laws of nature; we can't alter the constitution of things. We are willing to leave your own institutions to yourselves. We will not meddle with you. We leave you your own rights; and you shall continue your system as long as you please. But you must keep your slaves at home, and take care of them; and if they run away, you must be content to lose them; for such is the state of Northern sentiment, that a Fugitive Slave Bill will give you but a shadow of relief. Certainly it will not pay for the irritation it costs. In a few cases, it may be executed; in general, it will be a dead letter; and if you have any knowledge of human nature, you must see this; for where was there ever an instance of a law well executed, where nine-tenths of the people hated the very principle on which it was based?"

Every thing now is in a most singular and confused state; old parties are broken up and new organizations are forming. We are to have perhaps first chaos

and then order. It is a critical time. Allow me to say, that it is of the utmost importance to form a platform which shall shock no moral feeling, and be sure to command the assent of all the wise and good; and finally, of a permanent majority. I believe the thing is possible. In the first place, in organizing any body, in philosophy, religion, or politics, you must *have* a platform; you must stand somewhere; on some solid ground; for I cannot agree with the sermon preached last week,* that religion consists in having no system; that Christ himself had no collected light; his religion never would have prevailed in the world, if it had not commanded the assent of mankind by presenting a chain of connected truths. This is its glory. This is its power. And such a platform is necessary in combining mankind to any great result. They settle on principles just as the bees settle in swarms on the branches, fragrant with blossoms and flowers. And I must profess my firm conviction, that it is possible even at this excited period, to form such a platform as—if it would not settle all our difficulties immediately, would open the door to great efficiency and lasting benefits. Such a thing is possible. It is within the region of mortal wisdom and mortal hope. It is certainly within the power of God. Men are, after all, reasonable beings. Truth and justice are somewhere. They do exist, and may be shown. O, I long to see, I

* At an ordination in the Pleasant Street Church, Newburyport, Nov. 20, 1850.

long to scent on the vernal gale of our hope and salvation, the bundle of myrrh, which the satisfied community will welcome and own as destined to lie all night near to her heart. *My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.* —A *cluster* of camphire. A *bundle* of myrrh—you know what I mean.

We forget the past, and yet the past is prophetic of the future. It is a happy thing when men can be instructed from their own experience. Ever since my personal recollection, there has been an *upper-crust* party, who have always broke down under their own principles. They *seem* to be wise men; the most enlightened, the best members of society, the lawyers, the merchants, the clergy, and the men of the greatest leisure and the largest property; and yet they have admitted into their platform something which they broke down under. They were like a man attempting to carry a log too heavy for his sinews. The old federalists attempted to carry the funding system of Hamilton. They broke down under it. Then they took up the alien and sedition laws. They broke down under them. Then another party* broke down under the bank. Twice indeed has that mighty burden crushed us. Then the tariff was taken up, and down the party broke under it. In short, you will see, the upper part of society, as they esteem themselves, constantly breaking down under some ill-

* Nominally another.

adjusted platform; which, whether true or not, was not strong enough to unite the people in its support. So it has been; and so I suspect it will be; and it is time to learn the lesson so repeatedly taught; it is time to learn in all cases to anticipate the moral sense of the community and endeavor to meet it. Especially, beware of those measures which have a leaning towards oppression. The current of the times is towards freedom; and we cannot stop it. "The poorest being," says Mr. Burke, "that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression is an object respectable in the eyes of God and man."

The difficulties of our situation are no more than what is to be expected from the nature of our people. They are such as to awaken solicitude, but not to produce despair. If you dwell in a free atmosphere you must expect the wind sometimes to blow. If your window overlooks on the sea shore, the rocks, you must expect to see them resisting the billows and white with the spray. Clouds will sometimes overspread the sun, and the earthquake will shake even the solid ground. Man was born for his condition; he was born to grapple with difficulties. The trial that overcomes us is dreadful, but perhaps there is no greater motive for praise and thanksgiving than a trial which we overcome.

I love the Union—I would sacrifice almost everything to preserve it but truth and righteousness. I

honor the constitution, and I especially honor the constitution of Massachusetts, which I was once sworn to preserve;* and that instrument contains this noble sentiment: "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness." Now you must judge for yourselves. But my rule is, when I am cooped up between two contrary obligations, arising from my municipal standing, I shall always choose that which lies on the side of truth and eternal justice. It was a maxim among the Romans,† when the judge found himself between two clashing obligations, to interpret the law on the side of freedom. Noble people! Your nation has perished, and has been followed by a better religion and a worse conduct.

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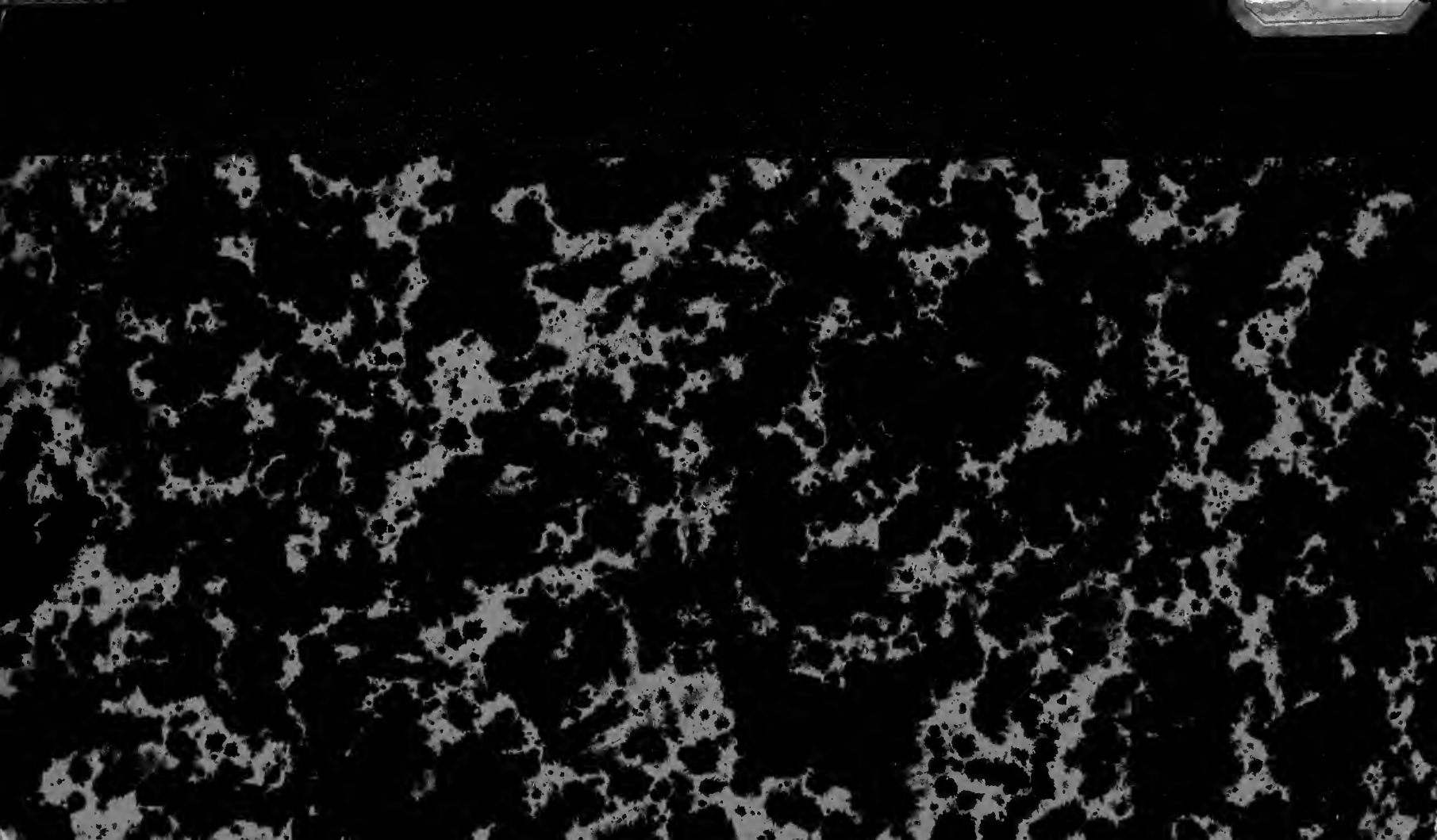
* When chosen chaplain to the regiment, about thirty years ago.

† Semper in dubiis benigniora præferenda sunt.

A FORM OF PRAYER,

For such Christians as mean to aid in carrying into execution the Fugitive Slave Law.

O, Lord God of mercy and compassion, who hearest the sighing of the prisoner, and loosest the bonds of such as are appointed to die; who hast, in Thy Gospel, taken captivity captive and opened the gates of freedom to all mankind,—I am liable this day to be called to a disagreeable duty. I am liable to be called on to assist in restoring a miserable fugitive to his bondage, his toil and his chain. O assist me to perform this dreadful task. Blind my eyes to all the evils of his state; may I disregard his sighs, his tears, and all his supplications; may I be enabled to do to him what I should wish no other being in the Universe to do to me; may I assist in plunging him back to all the evils which he has endeavored to escape. May I be enabled to think that this is my duty; and wilt thou reward me for doing this duty in keeping me and my family from all injustice and oppression; and crown our good deeds in promoting slavery with everlasting freedom in thy kingdom above; and wilt thou grant this for Jesus Christ's sake, who redeemed, by his precious blood, white men into freedom and negroes into perpetual bondage. Amen.

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